

## **Vermilion County Mayors' Council Annual Legislative Update July 22, 2010**

**Present:**; Mayor Sharon Simmons (Ridge Farm); Mayor Dave Ferber (Fairmount); Mayor Dennis Lucas (Georgetown); Mayor Eleanor White (Bismarck); Mayor Bob Parr (Oakwood); Mayor Clay Woodard (Catlin); Mayor Bill Crusinberry (Hoopeston)

**Guests:** John Dreher (county); Chief Eric Haas (Ridge Farm); Ed Chevront (Fairmount Trustee); Ben White (Bismarck); Doit Roberts (Oakwood Trustee); Lilly Woodard (Catlin); Representative Bill Black; political candidates Mike Puhr and Al Reynolds

Mayor Woodard made brief introductions and welcomed the attendees. L. Bolton read a list of those who had expressed their regrets at not being able to be attend.

Mayor Woodard asked for review and approval of minutes from the last meeting (April 22, 2010). Mayor Simmons moved for approval as presented; seconded by Mayor Ferber; motion passed.

Items from Vermilion Advantage:

- Jeanne Mulvaney from United Way wanted mayors to know she will be doing a follow up call to them as campaign gets underway; she was unable to attend this meeting to follow up from her presentation in April, but she will be contacting them.
- Mayors were reminded about the project to ensure newcomers to the county get information about the entire county and all the communities within; mayors are to provide Vermilion Advantage with information about their communities on a variety of topics – including garbage/yard waste/recycling; home improvements; any existing rules about having pets (licenses and leash laws, etc); neighborhood associations; any neighborhood covenants; utilities – how to sign up and contacts, including internet and cable; taxes for the specific municipality; youth curfews, if any; anything you may
- Mayors were also reminded about the picture project; the VA team is seeking sites within each community that mayors feel highlight their community; the pictures will be taken soon, so please submit the 3-4 sites within your community you want photographed and used to promote Vermilion County as soon as possible; this project is scheduled to begin soon, so we need to have the information to give to the photographer.
- Mayors received a copy of the new priority lists for road and non-road projects approved July 1<sup>st</sup> by the Inter-governmental Council, as well as Hoopeston projects ; mayors are urged to participate if possible, or at least forward information about potential projects to the VA office; mayors were given a description of the I-gov council as well as the East Central Illinois Economic Development District that gathers all of the projects to ensure they are submitted for consideration; the project lists go to area legislators as well, so that they can respond quickly when funding becomes available; mayors are encouraged to either attend/.send someone to quarterly I-gov meetings (next one is scheduled for October 7<sup>th</sup> at 1:15 in the Vermilion County 1<sup>st</sup> floor conference room) or to remain in communication with VA team as to potential projects within their communities.

Mayor Woodard opened the floor for comments from the political candidates present, Al Reynolds and Mike Puhr.

Representative Bill Black provided a legislative update for those present, extensively discussing ongoing state budget issues, expressing his frustration with current status of state debt and its impact on local communities; he expressed his concerns over the differences between Illinois and Indiana in economic development support and development environments; Representative Black discussed his frustrations over money owed to local communities, and his worry that funds may not be dispersed even after the November election; the governor continues to indicate the state will pay all of its bills by December 31<sup>st</sup>, but Representative Black says he has doubts about that happening, since the state has no money; he does believe there will have to be a tax increase, along with cuts being made; he says the upcoming sales tax holiday will cost the state millions of dollars we do not have; he is calling for a forensic audit to determine what we are spending dollars for in Illinois.

Mayor Woodard asked if everyone is working on a contingency plan; he says he is spending some sleepless nights looking at what to cut; Mayor White says she also is looking at potential cuts – she says it is not a case of “if” drastic cuts will need to be made, but “when”.

Representative Black noted the only good news he can report is that the state does plan to have capitol project dollars through bond sales that will be dedicated to sewer, water upgrades and projects; he noted that priority lists such as the I-gov lists – do make a difference because he and others can pull them out as dollars are available and direct them to the projects most in need; he also indicated he foresees some challenges ahead with new mandates on sewer and septic upgrades; and he noted the county may soon see a new coal project.

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned.

**Next meeting of the  
Vermilion County Mayors' Council will be held at  
6pm October 28, 2010  
in the Vermilion Advantage 1<sup>st</sup> floor conference room.  
Topic(s) of discussion to be set by Mayor Woodard.**

---L Bolton